

Crystallization-Study of Proverbs

Week Eight

The Multifarious Wisdom of God

Hymns: 23

Scripture Reading: Prov. 1:2; 8:1-31; 9:10; Rom. 11:33; 1 Cor. 1:24, 30; Col. 2:2-3; Eph. 3:10

Outline

§Day 1

- I. **The book of Proverbs stresses wisdom that we receive from God through contacting God—1:2; 2:10; 4:5; 9:10; 11:2b; 14:33a:**
 - A. **The subject of Proverbs is living a godly life by God’s wisdom—3:13-18; 8:11.**
 - B. **The central thought of Proverbs is that we should seek after wisdom so that we may live a godly life on earth that is acceptable to God—2:1-9.**
 - C. **Wisdom comes from God: “Jehovah gives wisdom; / From His mouth come knowledge and understanding”—v. 6.**
 - D. **Wisdom is more valuable and better than gold, silver, and corals, and is more desirable than anything else—3:14-15; 8:11, 19.**
 - E. **In certain portions of Proverbs the wisdom of God is personified—1:20; 3:19; 4:5-9; 8:1-36:**
 1. **This personification of God’s wisdom is a reference to the second of the Divine Trinity, who became wisdom from God to all the New Testament believers—Matt. 11:19; Col. 2:3; 1 Cor. 1:24, 30.**
 2. **“Jehovah by wisdom founded the earth”—Prov. 3:19a:**

- a. This One by whom Jehovah founded the earth and established the heavens is Christ, who is the wisdom of God—1 Cor. 1:24.
- b. Wisdom, as the master workman of God's creation of all things, is God's delight—Prov. 8:30.
- c. God's creation of all things is through Christ, who is wisdom and God's delight—3:19; Col. 1:16-17; Heb. 1:2.

§Day 2

II. Romans 11:33a speaks of God's wisdom: "Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God!":

A. It is important to see the difference between wisdom and knowledge—v. 33:

1. Wisdom is for planning and purposing—Eph. 1:9; 3:11.
2. Wisdom is seen in the initiation of something, as indicated by Romans 11:36: "Out from Him and through Him and to Him are all things."
3. God is the unique Initiator: "One God, the Father, out from whom are all things"—1 Cor. 8:6a:
 - a. God has initiated many things, not by His knowledge but by His wisdom—Prov. 3:19; 8:12, 22-31.
 - b. When God comes in to apply what He has initiated, He displays His knowledge.

B. The wisdom of God is "God's wisdom in a mystery, the wisdom which has been hidden, which God predestined before the ages for our glory"—1 Cor. 2:7:

1. As God's center and as our portion for our enjoyment, Christ is God's wisdom in a mystery that is deep and profound—Rom. 11:33.
2. Within God there is wisdom in a mystery; this wisdom has been hidden and predestined before the ages for our glory—1 Cor. 2:7.

C. "To the only wise God through Jesus Christ, to Him be the glory forever and ever. Amen"—Rom. 16:27:

1. In the local churches throughout the earth, we all give glory to the only wise God.

2. The wise God has given Jesus Christ to us according to the revelation of the mystery, which has been kept in silence in the times of the ages, who also is the One who has saved us, regenerated us, and through His divine dispensing is continually renewing and transforming us, and who will eventually glorify us and conform us to the image of God's firstborn Son, bringing us into glory—v. 25; 3:24-25; 5:10; 8:16, 23, 29; 12:1-2.

§Day 3

III. Christ is the wisdom of God—1 Cor. 1:24:

A. In the New Testament the personified wisdom of God is Christ as its reality—Prov. 8:1, 12; 9:1; Luke 2:40, 52; 7:35; Matt. 11:19:

1. The wisdom of Christ's deity was revealed in proportion to the measure of His bodily growth—Col. 2:2-3; Luke 2:40, 52.
2. Matthew 11:19b indicates that wisdom is Christ:
 - a. Whatever Christ did was done by the wisdom of God, which is Christ Himself—1 Cor. 1:24.
 - b. This wisdom was justified, vindicated, by His wise works, His wise deeds.
3. In Luke 7:35 the Lord Jesus said, "Wisdom is justified by all her children":
 - a. Those who believe in Christ are the children of wisdom, those who justify Christ and His deeds and who follow Him as their wisdom.
 - b. Christ's work is to produce us as the children of wisdom caring for the life of wisdom.

B. In Christ "all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden"—Col. 2:3:

1. God is the unique source of wisdom and knowledge:
 - a. We need to trace wisdom and knowledge to their true source in God—1 Cor. 8:6.
 - b. All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden in Christ, who is the mystery of God—Col. 2:2-3.
2. The fact that wisdom and knowledge are embodied in Christ is proved by

His spoken words, especially those recorded in the Gospels of Matthew and John:

- a. The Lord's words recorded in these two books contain the highest philosophy.
 - b. The concept in the Lord's words is deep and profound.
3. Since wisdom and knowledge are stored up in Christ as a treasure, we cannot have wisdom and knowledge unless we have Christ—Col. 1:27; 3:4, 10-11.
 4. If we exercise our being to contact the Lord, Christ as the life-giving Spirit will saturate our spirit and our mind, and we will have in our experience the wisdom and knowledge that are hidden in Christ—2:3.

§Day 4

IV. As believers, we are in Christ, and Christ has become the wisdom from God to us—1 Cor. 1:30:

- A. What we believers, as the new creation, are and have is of God, not of ourselves—Rom. 11:36.**
- B. As our wisdom, Christ is all-inclusive, becoming wisdom to us from God in righteousness, sanctification, and redemption—1 Cor. 1:30:**
 1. By Christ as our righteousness, we have been justified by God so that we might be reborn in our spirit to receive the divine life—Rom. 5:18.
 2. By Christ as our sanctification, we are being sanctified in our soul, that is, transformed in our mind, emotion, and will with His divine life—6:19, 22; 12:2; 2 Cor. 3:18.
 3. Christ as our redemption is for the redemption of our body, by which we will be transfigured in our body with His divine life to have His glorious likeness—Rom. 8:23; Phil. 3:21.
- C. To us from God in 1 Corinthians 1:30 refers to something present, practical, and experiential in the way of transmission:**
 1. For Christ to become wisdom to us from God indicates that there is a transmission of Christ as wisdom from God to us for our daily experience—v. 30.

2. Christ as wisdom should unceasingly flow from God to us to be our present and practical wisdom in our experience.
3. If we remain with the Lord to receive His dispensing (John 15:4-5), He will be transmitted into us as the wisdom to handle various problems and matters.
4. If we are one with the Lord and receive His dispensing, we will experience and enjoy Him as our wisdom day by day and hour by hour—1 Cor. 6:17; 1:30.

§Day 5

V. Through the church the multifarious wisdom of God will be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenlies—Eph. 3:10:

A. The rulers and authorities are the angelic rulers and authorities, both good and evil.

B. Ephesians 3:10 especially refers to the evil ones—Satan and his angels:

1. Satan has his kingdom, his angels, and his sphere of rule—Matt. 12:26; 25:41; Eph. 6:12:
 - a. Satan's sphere of rule is in the air and on the earth—2:2; 1 John 5:19.
 - b. The book of Daniel indicates that all nations on earth are under the rule of Satan in the air—10:13.
2. Through the church God will make His wisdom known not mainly to human beings but to those rebellious angels who are the followers of God's enemy—Rev. 12:7.

C. Even the rebellion of Satan is within the realm of God's wisdom—Isa. 14:12-14:

1. If it were not for Satan's rebellion, God's wisdom could not be made known in a full way.
2. Satan has created many opportunities for God's wisdom to be manifested in a multifarious way, that is, in various ways and aspects and from many angles—Eph. 3:10.

3. Eventually, Satan, God's enemy, will be subdued and will come to know God's multifarious wisdom—v. 10.

D. When God's chosen and redeemed people partake of and enjoy the riches of Christ, these riches constitute them the church, through which God's multifarious wisdom is made known to the angelic rulers and authorities in the heavenlies—vv. 8-10:

1. The day is coming when, through the church, Satan and his angels will be put to shame.
2. They will realize that everything they have done has given God the opportunity to manifest His wisdom.

§Day 6

VI. The New Jerusalem, as the ultimate consummation of the church, will be full of wisdom—Rev. 1:11; 21:2, 9-11; 22:16:

A. The New Jerusalem is designed and constructed by God, the Architect and Builder of "the city which has the foundations"—Heb. 11:10:

1. This indicates that God is a skilled Designer and top Craftsman.
2. As such an Architect and Builder, God certainly has not designed and built a physical city—Rev. 21:9-11.
3. To say that the New Jerusalem is a physical city depreciates God's wisdom and belittles Him as the eternal, wise Architect—Heb. 11:10.
4. God has designed and built a spiritual entity for His corporate expression—Rev. 21:9-11.
5. In His wisdom God constructs the New Jerusalem by dispensing Himself as the Architect and Builder into our being—Heb. 11:10; 2 Cor. 13:14; Rev. 21:2; 22:1-2.

B. If we realize that the New Jerusalem is a sign that signifies spiritual and divine things, we will begin to see the wisdom of God in this city—1:1; 21:9-11.

C. God is a wise Architect and Builder who designs and builds such a city to be the full manifestation of His multifarious

wisdom—Eph. 3:10; Rev. 21:2, 9-11.

WEEK 8 — DAY 1

Morning Nourishment

Prov. 9:10 The fear of Jehovah is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.

3:19 Jehovah by wisdom founded the earth; He established the heavens by understanding.

8:30 ...I was by Him, as a master workman; and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him.

Wisdom is the Spirit of God (cf. Exo. 28:3; Deut. 34:9), which is also Christ; thus, it can be poured out upon man (Prov. 1:23). This is very clear in the New Testament: those who receive wisdom are those who are filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 6:3, 10). First Corinthians 12:8 says that a word of wisdom is given to man through the Spirit; thus, we cannot receive the words in Proverbs by our natural concepts. Rather, we need to let the Spirit of God be poured upon us so that we may receive wisdom. (CWWL, 1956, vol. 1, p. 506)

Today's Reading

Blessed is the man who finds wisdom.... She is more precious than corals, and nothing we desire compares with her. Length of days is in her right hand; in her left hand are riches and honor. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to those who lay hold of her, and happy are those who hold her fast (Prov. 3:13-18; 8:11). We should not let wisdom depart from our sight, but we should keep sound wisdom and discretion. They will be life for our soul and a graceful ornament for our neck (3:21-22). The real beauty is wisdom and discretion.

In certain portions of Proverbs the wisdom of God is personified. This personification of God's wisdom is the second of the Trinity, the Son of God. Christ is the personified wisdom of God.

Jehovah by wisdom founded the earth; He established the heavens by understanding (3:19). This One by whom Jehovah founded the earth and

established the heavens is Christ, who is the wisdom of God.

In 8:22-31 personified wisdom says that Jehovah possessed her in the beginning of His way, before His works of old. Wisdom was set up from eternity, from the beginning, before the earth was. When there were no depths, wisdom was brought forth, when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills, wisdom was brought forth; when He had not yet made the earth and the fields, nor the first dust of the world. When He established the heavens, wisdom was there; when He inscribed a circle upon the surface of the deep, when He made firm the skies above, when the fountains of the deep became strong, when He set for the sea its boundary, that the waters should not transgress His commandment, when He marked out the foundations of the earth; then wisdom was by Him, as a master workman. Wisdom was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him, rejoicing in His habitable earth; and wisdom's delight was in the sons of men. Again, this personified wisdom refers to Christ.

In verses 12 through 21 we are told that wisdom dwells with prudence and finds knowledge and discretion. Counsel and sound wisdom are hers. Wisdom is understanding and has might. By wisdom kings reign, and rulers decree justice. By wisdom princes rule, and nobles—all who judge righteously. Wisdom loves those who love her, and those who seek wisdom diligently will find her. Riches and honor are with wisdom, enduring wealth and righteousness. Wisdom's fruit is better than gold, even fine gold; and her yield than choice silver. Wisdom walks in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of justice, that wisdom may cause those who love her to inherit substance and that she may fill their treasuries. Once again, this personified wisdom signifies Christ. If we have Christ as wisdom, we have everything, including spiritual things and material things. (Life-study of Proverbs, pp. 9-11)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1953, vol. 2, pp. 213-223; CWWL, 1956, vol. 1, pp. 268-273, 501-507, 509-519

WEEK 8 — DAY 2

Morning Nourishment

Rom. 11:33 Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God!
How unsearchable are His judgments and untraceable His ways!

16:25 ...My gospel,...the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the
revelation of the mystery, which has been kept in silence in the times of
the ages.

27 To the only wise God through Jesus Christ, to Him be the glory forever and
ever. Amen.

Ephesians 1 speaks of the power of God (vv. 19-20), chapter 2, of the
grace of God (vv. 5-8), and chapter 3, of the wisdom of God. God is very
wise, and the universe reveals His wisdom.

We need to see the difference between wisdom and knowledge. In
Colossians 2:3 the two are mentioned together. Wisdom is both higher and
deeper than knowledge. Wisdom is seen in the initiation of something, for
example, in the formulation of a new invention, and knowledge is seen in
the practical application. If you have only knowledge and lack wisdom, you
will not be able to initiate anything nor to invent anything. God is the
unique Initiator. He has initiated many things, not by His knowledge, but by
His wisdom. When He comes in to apply what He has initiated, He displays
His knowledge.

In our case, wisdom is in our spirit, and knowledge is in our mind. If
you do not know how to get into your spirit, you may have a great deal of
knowledge, but you will not have any wisdom. But if you are a person in the
spirit, you will be wise. Furthermore, in your mind you will have knowledge,
prudence. (Life-study of Ephesians, pp. 267-268)

Today's Reading

Wisdom is different from cleverness and deeper than cleverness. It is
possible to be clever without being wise. For example, a criminal may be
very clever, but he is altogether lacking in wisdom.

The revelation of the mystery of Christ, the church, by the Holy Spirit concerns God's wisdom in a mystery. In 1 Corinthians 2:6 and 7 Paul says, "We do speak wisdom among those who are full-grown, yet a wisdom not of this age nor of the rulers of this age, who are being brought to nought; but we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, the wisdom which has been hidden, which God predestined before the ages for our glory." God's wisdom is Christ (1 Cor. 1:24), who is the hidden mystery predestined, pre-designated, and foreordained before the ages, in eternity, for our glory. According to 2:7, God's wisdom is in a mystery; it is a mysterious wisdom. God's wisdom is the wisdom which has been hidden and which God predestinated before the ages for our glory. God's wisdom is our destiny, and this destiny was determined by God, decided by Him, beforehand. In eternity God determined our destiny. He predestined His wisdom to be for our glory. This means that in eternity He decided that His wisdom would be our destiny and glory.

As God's center and as our portion for our enjoyment, Christ is God's wisdom in a mystery, a wisdom that is deep and profound, beyond human understanding. Within God there is something which Paul describes as wisdom in a mystery. This wisdom has been hidden and predestined before the ages for our glory. As believers we have a destiny, and this destiny is the ultimate and consummate portion of our enjoyment. God's wisdom in a mystery has not only been hidden but also predestined by God to become our destiny for our glory. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 91, 2089)

When we live in the oneness of the Body of Christ and express this Body in the various local churches, the result will be: (1) God's crushing of Satan under our feet (Rom. 16:20a), (2) our enjoying the grace of Christ and the peace of God (v. 20b), and (3) the giving of glory to the only wise God (vv. 25-27). This is the peak of our church life. No matter how many saints or local churches there are on earth, in the various places we all give glory to the only wise God. (CWWL, 1990, vol. 3, "A Deeper Study of the Divine Dispensing," p. 442)

Further Reading: Life-study of Proverbs, msgs. 1-2

WEEK 8 — DAY 3

Morning Nourishment

Prov. 8:12 I, wisdom, dwell with prudence, and I find knowledge and discretion.

1 Cor. 1:24 But to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

Col. 2:2-3 ...The mystery of God, Christ, in whom all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden.

Proverbs 8:1 and 12 and 9:1 speak of wisdom, the reality of which is Christ. In Matthew 11:19 the Lord Jesus, referring to Himself said, “Wisdom is justified by her works.” Wisdom is Christ (1 Cor. 1:24, 30). Whatever Christ did was done by the wisdom of God, which is Himself. This wisdom was justified, vindicated, by His wise deeds.

In Matthew 11:19 some authorities read “children” instead of “works” (see Luke 7:35). Being children is a matter of life. We are not students of wisdom caring merely for the knowledge of wisdom. We are children of wisdom caring for the life of wisdom. Because we have the life of Christ, we have the life of wisdom. As children of wisdom, the believers in Christ justify Christ and His deeds and follow Him as their wisdom.

Christ is not only God’s power, but also God’s wisdom (1 Cor. 1:24). He has been made wisdom to us from God (1 Cor. 1:30). Wisdom is for planning and purposing, whereas power is for carrying out and accomplishing what is planned and purposed. In God’s salvation Christ crucified is both God’s power and His wisdom. We need Christ as both power and wisdom. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 481, 315)

Today’s Reading

Paul told the Colossian believers that all the treasures of genuine wisdom and knowledge are hidden in Christ [Col. 2:3]. This is the spiritual wisdom and knowledge of the divine economy concerning Christ and the church. Wisdom is related to our spirit, and knowledge is related to our

mind (Eph. 1:8, 17).

Moreover, wisdom and knowledge refer to all the “stories” of God. All the stories of God are wisdom and knowledge. All the wisdom and knowledge pertaining to God’s stories are hidden in this Christ who is the mystery of God. Therefore, Colossians 2:6-7 indicates that we who have received Christ Jesus the Lord should walk in Him and be rooted and built up in Him.

God is the unique source of wisdom and knowledge. All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden in the Christ who is the mystery of God. Because the church in Colossae had been invaded by pagan philosophy, Paul was helping the Colossians to trace wisdom and knowledge to their true source in God. Christ is the mystery of God, who alone is the source of all wisdom and knowledge.

The fact that wisdom and knowledge are embodied in Christ is proved by His spoken words, especially those recorded in the Gospels of Matthew and John. In these books, the Lord spoke about the kingdom and about life. The Lord’s words recorded in these books contain the highest philosophy. None of the teachings of the philosophers, including the ethical teachings of Confucius, compare to them. The concept in the Lord’s words is deep and profound. Anyone who makes a thorough study of philosophy will have to admit that the highest philosophy is that found in the teachings of Jesus Christ. Truly all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are in Him. Since wisdom and knowledge are stored up in Christ as a treasure, we cannot have wisdom and knowledge unless we have Christ.

If we exercise our being to contact the Lord, Christ as the life-giving Spirit will saturate our spirit and our mind. Then we also will have in our experience the wisdom and knowledge that are hidden in Christ. In this way we will experience Him as the mystery of God. We should not be like the Colossians, who allowed pagan philosophy to defraud them of the wisdom and knowledge hidden in Christ. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 3557-3558)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1956, vol. 2, “Three Aspects of the Church, Book 1: The Meaning of the Church,” ch. 3

WEEK 8 — DAY 4

Morning Nourishment

1 Cor. 1:30 But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became wisdom to us from God: both righteousness and sanctification and redemption.

Rom. 8:23 ...We ourselves groan in ourselves, eagerly awaiting sonship, the redemption of our body.

Christ as the wisdom of God flows unceasingly from God to us to be our present and practical wisdom in our experience. As we face certain problems and realize that we do not know how to handle them, we should apply Christ as our wisdom. If we remain with the Lord to receive His dispensing, He will be transmitted into us as the wisdom to handle all kinds of problems and matters. This is to apply Christ as wisdom in our daily life.

Wisdom may be understood as the way to do things. If we have wisdom, we will know the proper way to do things, but if we are not wise, our way of doing things will be foolish. In order to have the best way to do things in our daily life, we must have wisdom. Christ as wisdom to the believers is actually the divine way. Hence, wisdom in 1 Corinthians 1:30 is equal to the way in John 14:6, a verse in which the Lord Jesus says, "I am the way." God's way is His wisdom. If we enjoy Christ and participate in Him, we will have Him as our wisdom, as our way. This wisdom comes from our enjoyment of Christ. Day by day and hour by hour we should live in the spirit and exercise the spirit to call on the name of the Lord Jesus. If we do this, we will enjoy Christ and have Him as our wisdom, that is, our way of doing things. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, p. 3122)

Today's Reading

Christ has become wisdom to us from God. In 1 Corinthians 1:30... Paul does not say that Christ became our wisdom; instead, he says that Christ became wisdom "to us from God." The expression to us from God indicates something present, practical, experiential, and ongoing in the way of transmission. For Christ to become wisdom to us from God indicates that

there is the transmission of Christ as wisdom from God to us for our daily experience. Paul composed verse 30 in the particular way he did in order to point out to the believers that Christ should continually become wisdom to us from God.

God Himself in Christ is wisdom to us, constantly transmitting Christ, His wisdom, into us as the divine element that constitutes us wise persons.

Christ became wisdom to us from God as three vital things in God's salvation: (1) righteousness (for our past), ...(2) sanctification (for our present), ...and (3) redemption (for our future).... It is of God that we participate in such a complete and perfect salvation, which makes our entire being—spirit, soul, and body—organically one with Christ and makes Christ everything to us.

On the one hand, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption cover three stages of God's salvation: regeneration in the spirit (for our past), sanctification in the soul (for our present), and redemption in the body (for our future). On the other hand, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption refer to three aspects of the nature of God's salvation that we need to experience daily in our Christian living and work. Today in our living and work we need Christ as righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. Every day we need to be righteous, we need to be sanctified, and we need to be redeemed in all matters of our living. Christ, the wisdom of God transmitted into our being, is doing everything within us to make us righteous in our deeds and to sanctify us in our nature. Hence, whatever we do must be righteous and holy. Not only so, Christ as the wisdom of God redeems us from all things other than God (1 Pet. 1:18). Every day our living and work must be righteous, holy, and redeemed. Even our entire being should be righteous, holy, and redeemed. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 3122-3123)

Further Reading: CWWN, vol. 36, "Christ Becoming Our Wisdom," pp. 165-185

WEEK 8 — DAY 5

Morning Nourishment

Eph. 3:10 In order that now to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenlies the multifarious wisdom of God might be made known through the church.

6:12 For our wrestling is not against blood and flesh but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenlies.

[Ephesians 3:10] says that through the church the multifarious wisdom of God is made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenlies. These rulers and authorities are the angelic rulers and authorities, both good and evil. The passage here especially refers to the evil ones—Satan and his angels. According to the New Testament, Satan has his kingdom, his angels, and his sphere of rule. Satan's sphere of rule is in the air and on the earth. The book of Daniel indicates that all nations on earth are under the rule of Satan in the air. Therefore, through the church God makes His wisdom known not mainly to human beings but to those rebellious angels who are the followers of God's enemy. (Life-study of Ephesians, p. 268)

Today's Reading

If you are a person full of wisdom, the more troubles and difficulties you have, the more wisdom you will express....You need trouble in order to display your wisdom.

God also needs trouble. He even needs an adversary, Satan.... When I was young, I wondered why God did not cast Satan into the lake of fire immediately when he rebelled against Him. I questioned why God gave Satan so much freedom. I also asked why God put the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the garden of Eden. If this tree had not been there, man would not have fallen. But without Satan and without the tree of knowledge, God's wisdom cannot be fully manifested. Satan and the tree of knowledge

have created many opportunities for God's wisdom to be manifested in a multifarious way, that is, in various ways and aspects and from many angles. The

Greek word translated "multifarious" indicates that God's wisdom has many sides, aspects, and directions. Only through problems can all the aspects of God's wisdom be manifested.

In Ephesians 3:10 Paul declares that God's multifarious wisdom is made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenlies through the church. The church is the Body of Christ, the joint-heirs, and the joint-partakers. The church is composed of those who once were ruined, corrupted, and damaged. Before we were saved, we were vipers, poisonous serpents. Furthermore, we were dead in trespasses and sins. Moreover, we were scattered and divided, utterly unable to be one. Thus, all the members of the church were in a hopeless situation. Nevertheless, God in His wisdom is able to make us the church. Now we are not only redeemed, saved, cleansed, freed, liberated, and regenerated—we are also united. We are one with God and with one another. Therefore, we are the church. The church is God's greatest boast. Although you may not care that much for the church, God cares very much for the church. Sometimes God may say, "Look, Satan, I have taken the very people whom you have ruined and I have made them into the church. Do you have the wisdom to do such a thing? You do not have this wisdom, but I have it."

The church through which God's wisdom is so marvelously displayed is God's masterpiece. In the eyes of God the most wonderful thing in the universe is the church, for through the church God's multifarious wisdom is made known to Satan and his angels. The day is coming when Satan and his angels will be put to shame. They will realize that everything they have done has given God the opportunity to manifest His wisdom. In the same principle, our failures, mistakes, defeats, and wrongdoings have also given God opportunities to display His wisdom. (Life-study of Ephesians, pp. 268-270, 272-273)

Further Reading: Life-study of Ephesians, msg. 31; CWWL, 1965, vol. 1, "The Vision, Practice, and Building Up of the Church as the Body of Christ," chs. 1, 3

WEEK 8 — DAY 6

Morning Nourishment

Heb. 11:10 For he eagerly waited for the city which has the foundations, whose Architect and Builder is God.

Rev. 21:2 And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

The New Jerusalem is designed and constructed by God. Speaking of Abraham, Hebrews 11:10 says, “He eagerly waited for the city which has the foundations, whose Architect and Builder is God.” The Greek word for architect in this verse can also be translated either “builder” or “artificer.” This indicates that God is a skillful designer and a top craftsman. As such an Architect and Builder, God certainly has not designed and built a physical city.

Ephesians 2:10 reveals that the church is God’s masterpiece. The Greek word for masterpiece, *poiema*, means something which has been written or composed as a poem. Poetry expresses the writer’s wisdom. Through the church as a poem written by Him God makes known His multifarious wisdom (Eph. 3:10). The New Jerusalem, as the ultimate consummation of the church, will be full of wisdom. God designed the New Jerusalem with His wisdom, and this city will display His wisdom for eternity. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, p. 2029)

Today’s Reading

To say that the New Jerusalem is a physical city depreciates God’s wisdom and belittles Him as the eternal, wise Architect. If we realize that the New Jerusalem is a sign which signifies spiritual and divine things, we shall begin to see the wisdom of God in this city. God is a wise Designer and Craftsman who designs such a city to be a full manifestation of His multifarious wisdom. Furthermore, in His wisdom God constructs the New Jerusalem by dispensing Himself as the Architect and Builder into our being.

God's design is revealed in the book of Ephesians.... In chapters 1 and 3 Paul speaks of God's economy, which is God's plan with a design. Surely, God has not designed a material city, and He has no intention of building a material city. God has designed and built a spiritual entity for His corporate expression.

The city of the living God was seen from afar, longed after, and waited for by the Old Testament saints (Heb. 11:13b, 16a, 10a).... [Abraham] sojourned in the land of promise as a pilgrim, even as an exile and an expatriate, longing after a better country, a heavenly one (Heb. 11:16). Isaac and Jacob followed him in the same steps, living on earth as strangers and sojourners and waiting for the God-built city of foundations.

In eternity past the Triune God made a plan, and throughout the centuries He has been carrying out His economy. The Son came through incarnation, lived on earth for thirty-three and a half years, died on the cross, was resurrected, and then ascended. Since His ascension, the Spirit has been working out many wonderful things. Surely, as the conclusion of all this, God will not build a material city for His redeemed people to live in. The New Jerusalem is a city, but it is not a physical, material city.

Hebrews 11:10 indicates that God is the Architect and the Builder of the New Jerusalem....This is "the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem" (Heb. 12:22), "the Jerusalem above" (Gal. 4:26), "the holy city, New Jerusalem" (Rev. 21:2; 3:12), which God has prepared for His people (Heb. 11:16), and the tabernacle of God in which God will dwell with men for eternity (Rev. 21:3). As the patriarchs waited for this city, so we also seek it (Heb. 13:14).

Consider the New Jerusalem as it is revealed in the New Testament. Who other than God is capable of designing such a city? Only God as the supreme Architect is able to design it. The New Jerusalem was designed by the eternal, divine Architect. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 2029, 2683, 56)

Further Reading: The Conclusion of the New Testament, msgs. 6, 9, 29, 45, 187, 190, 193, 256, 307, 337, 344

<< **WEEK 8 — HYMN** >>

Hymns, #23 In all Thy wisdom, Father God

Worship of the Father — His Wisdom

**1 In all Thy wisdom, Father God,
According to Thy will,
Eternal purpose Thou hast made
That all Thy Son might fill.**

(Chorus)

*How deep and rich Thy wisdom is,
O who can search and trace?
Yet, Father God, in it we find
Thy mercy and Thy grace!*

**2 How wondrously Thou mad'st all things,
O who can know Thy mind?
All are of Thee, thru Thee, to Thee,
Thy wisdom here we find.**

**3 Thy wisdom shuts up all in sin,
That mercy may be shown,
That none may boast in anything
But in Thyself alone.**

**4 In wisdom, by the cross, Thou hast
For us redemption made,
That in our spirit we may have
Thyself, the treasure, laid.**

**5 Thy wisdom thru Thy Church is known
By principalities,**

**Thru us Thy wisdom manifold
Shown in the heavenlies.
6 When in the new Jerusalem
In mercy we will boast,
Thy wisdom will be known for aye
Unto the uttermost.**